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The Theology of Church Building in India

J. F. BUTLER

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The notes in this article refer by letter and number to books listed in the Bibliography at the end.)

A. GENERAL PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN ART OUTSIDE THE WEST

In a recent series of articles¹ I have been feeling my way towards a doctrine about the arts in the Younger Churches. This doctrine, so far as I have yet attained it, can be summarized in these eight theses:

1. *Christian art is necessary.*—Art for the Christian Church is not a sin, nor a mere luxury: it is all but a necessity. Not only does the Church have to have buildings and cult-implements of some kind, and had better have them beautiful rather than ugly; more importantly, the side of human nature which makes art is (for the community, even if not for every individual) an essential side, which like the rest of human nature must be redeemed and used to God's glory, or else it will remain as sin and as a centre of the personality's disintegration. Thus bad or warped Christian art, while not so immediately hostile to the soul as is bad Christian conduct or devotion, yet is both the expression of a spiritual disease and a cause of a worsening of that disease: contrariwise, sound Christian art both expresses and propagates spiritual health.

¹ B6, B7, B8, B9.

2. *Art in the western Churches' 'mission fields', till about thirty years ago, has been thoroughly western.*—It is true that in its first great expansion—from about A.D. 30 to roughly A.D. 1100, in the growth begun by the 'acts' of the Apostles, consolidated, despite barbarian inroads, as the official religion of the Roman Empire, pushed back by the spectacular sweep of Islam, and finally all but halted in the second, the mediaeval, consolidation of western 'Christendom'—in this first great expansion the Church took over local art-forms and used them freely, till gradually out of them it developed forms uniquely its own. The second great expansion, the modern 'missionary' period, began, for Rome, with the great Portuguese pioneering voyages; for Protestantism, not till the very end of the eighteenth century, with the multiplication of the great Missionary Societies; for all, it is ending now, as every corner of the globe has been touched by the Gospel and each Confession in its own way begins to hand over power to the local nationals. In this second expansion, western Christianity has for much the most part exported its own art into the newly evangelized areas. There have been some fascinating exceptions to this—such as the Japanese seventeenth-century martyr-paintings, Castiglione's Chinese paintings in the Ricci period, some aspects of the Spanish 'mission churches' in Mexico, southern U.S.A. and Paraguay, the great series of Congo crucifixes of 'the era of Christ the Redeemer', and 'Père Six' cathedral at Phat-Diem in the late nineteenth century. But, by and large, the modern missionary movement, till quite recently, has taken western art-forms with it. Converts have been trained on these, have come to expect them and are, with few exceptions, intensely conservative about them.

3. *That westernization of Christian art outside Europe was thoroughly vicious.*—It is invidious, or perhaps meaningless, to condemn the past; and I do not intend to assert that the original westernizers acted in bad faith, or that their policy did much harm in the context of their own times, or even that any other policy was possible in the psychology of those times. But its continuance today must be radically condemned. It stamps the Church as unnecessarily foreign. We cannot indeed avoid the fact of history that in most places Christianity has come to non-Christian lands from the West, or the fact of theology that Christianity must radically criticize all local thought-forms and conduct-forms and demand therefore some measure of break by the convert from his non-Christian society. That much denationalization is part of the necessary price of Gospel truth, which on some matters cannot compromise. It is therefore all the more important that this necessary evil should be imposed only where it really is necessary: but the westernizing of Christian art grossly exaggerates it. Western buildings, pictures and so forth have flaunted foreignness at the convert, and then have left the foreignized convert to flaunt himself at the local culture. The result has been disintegration both in the individual and in his society—a dull art that expresses no lyric release of spirit, and heavy Christianity that cannot soar, a *milieu* resentful about its sterile disruption. Westernized art might pass in days when the superiority of the West was taken for granted and western colonialism was taken to be just and beneficial; it is hopelessly out of place amid modern nationalisms.

4. *There has been a reaction lately from this westernism, in the enlightened among both nationals and missionaries.* As a powerful

force, it dates from 1923, the year in which, shortly after his arrival in China as Papal Legate, Archbishop (now Cardinal) Celso Costantini sent a formal and closely-reasoned letter to two of his Prefects Apostolic, requiring them in future to erect churches in the Chinese style.¹ It is true that in this pronouncement Mgr Costantini was consciously building on many precedents in Roman theory and practice;² on the other hand, it is also true that after 1923 Roman missions, like the rest of us, have perpetrated many shocking westernisms: nevertheless, 1923 was a decisive date. The movement thus begun culminated in the great Vatican Exhibition of 1950.³ Most of the Protestant experiments along the same lines, such as the wonderful pictures by Canon E. G. Paterson's boys at Cyrene in Southern Rhodesia, and the *jebalayam* at Tirupattur, date from after 1923; but enough are earlier to show that they are partly independent of Mgr Costantini's initiative.⁴ A new spirit has been stirring, replacing the old colonialism in Church as in State; and new art-forms have been sought to match it.

5. *The 'adaptation' which this reform calls for is not a simple matter.*—The reaction, thus begun in all Confessions, is as yet far from complete; even the need for it is not widely accepted. And it would be wrong to join over-ardent reformers in attributing all slowness and hesitation here to conservative apathy or even to 'imperialism' and 'slave-mentality'. The doubts and hesitations are very often due, at least in part, to the fact that the 'adaptation' of indigenous art-forms for Christian uses is fraught with difficulty and danger. Non-Christian forms are full of symbolisms, associations, purposes and sentiments which are alien, some even hostile, to Christian truth.⁵ Our use of them, therefore, must needs be cautious and experimental.

6. *This already complex situation is further complicated by the emergence of 'modern' art.*—Adaptation is sometimes debated as if there were a straight issue between western traditionalism and other traditionalisms. But that is not the case. The West has itself deserted its traditional styles for modern techniques. These claim to be international, supra-racial; and some of them will unquestionably oust eastern traditions as they have ousted western. The sternest Indian nationalist, for example, does not seem to mind ferro-concrete office-blocks that look very like office-blocks in New York; and he certainly does not want to design a Hindu motor-car. Ought we then to consider the adaptation problem as out-of-date, and simply by-pass it, by building in a style which is neither western nor indigenous but modern?

7. *No static solution must be sought.*—'Culture-mingling' (of which our problem is a facet)⁶ has few laws but many surprises. Our problem is not one that can be posed and answered: art lives in an advance to creative novelty; so any final solution could only be a sterile one. The answer will not come in any theory, but only in the creative life of art itself, through long years of experiment and groping. All that

¹ C14, 212-3, 223-9.

² C14, *pass.*, esp. I. v, xv (39-45, 141-6); S2.

³ C1; G1; H1; H2; H3; H4; L3; O1; S1; V1.

⁴ L1, 6, 18; various plates in F1, F2, F3.

⁵ V., e.g. D1; L1, 25-6, 29, 47-8, 246; C14, 169-75, for various aspects of the controversy.

⁶ H5; B9.

the theorist can do is to demonstrate the futility of certain blind alleys such as continued westernism, and help the Church as a whole to give the atmosphere of mingled adventure and patience in which alone the creative artists will be able to struggle towards the temporary solution for our age.

8. *There are no basic theological objections to the experiments called for.*—Every church building, since it serves certain religious purposes and expresses certain religious ideas, must stand under theological judgment. Any particular experiments in either adaptation or modernism, involving as they do *rapprochement* to purposes and ideas not in the Christian tradition, stand in special need of careful theological scrutiny; and indeed part of my purpose in this article is to make such theological criticism of some Indian experiments. But the general principle of such experiments cannot be ruled out *a priori* on theological grounds. In missiology, one must either grant some degree of validity to non-Christian systems and their associated cultures, or one must deny it. The former position is taken, in different forms, by Liberal Protestantism and by Roman Catholicism; the latter is involved in the now fashionable Barthianism. To the Liberal, adaptation is the most natural thing in the world: it is simply the mode in which, in art, Christianity is 'the crown of Hinduism' and of other faiths. Likewise Mgr Costantini, on the Roman side, can say: 'The art of the peoples of ancient civilization, in India and the Far East, is *naturaliter Christiana*, that is to say, is marvellously prepared, by its highly spiritual nature, to interpret Christian subjects and put itself at the service of Christian worship.'¹ It is not perhaps so obvious, but it is equally true, that a wide range of experiment can likewise be justified in terms of the 'Biblical' theology now dominant in Protestantism. For, according to that, all 'religion' (which includes all outer forms, western and eastern alike) is under the judgment of God: therefore both non-Christian forms and forms which have had centuries of Christian usage are alike neutral vessels, which can be filled either with men's imaginings or with the true Word of God or with such compromises as we in our partial regeneration may contrive. Particular cases, then, must meet particular criticism; but there is no general theological ban on experiment itself.

These are the theses which I have been developing elsewhere, in a general form. My purpose in the present article is to begin a special application of them to India. I can do this only very tentatively, not at all dogmatically—because of the limitations of my experience and knowledge; because I am of the wrong nationality for this task; and because, as my seventh thesis asserted, the future Indian Christian art will come in a spontaneous creative advance, guided by its own concrete life, very little controlled or predicted by theory. In what follows, therefore, I can wish only to set some thoughts stirring, to indicate some possible lines of experiment, to focus some of the experience of the past upon the problems of the present, and perhaps to prevent some further groping in dead ends.

I shall here confine myself to the problems of Indian church buildings, and shall only occasionally glance, for the sake of illustration, at

¹ C1, 14 (my trans.); cf. S2.

other Christian arts within India, and at Christian building and other arts in other lands.

B. CHRISTIAN BUILDING IN INDIA IN THE PAST

Wise planning for the future begins by taking stock of the past. What, then, has Christian building been in India in the past? In brief, it has been, till recent years, on the whole good in quality, but thoroughly western.

For most practical purposes, Christian building in India must be taken as beginning with the Portuguese.¹ It is a little odd that the Portuguese in India built so little in their own distinctive 'Manueline' style,² which was once thought to contain elements culled in India: most good scholars now deny such direct Indian influence, but the style does unquestionably arise from the impulse and upsurge of the great adventurings which led the Portuguese to India.³ But those Portuguese, though they did not build very distinctively, did build nobly: they stood in a great tradition, and had wealth ample for living up to it. In Old Goa itself, four great churches that survive, and several now destroyed, and many smaller churches besides, were or are very fine specimens indeed of Baroque or Mannerism: so are the great church of Sant' Ana de Talaulim in the Island of Goa, the cathedrals of Damão (Daman) and of São Paulo at Dio (Diu), and several smaller churches in the old settlements, even as far afield as San Thomé, Madras.⁴

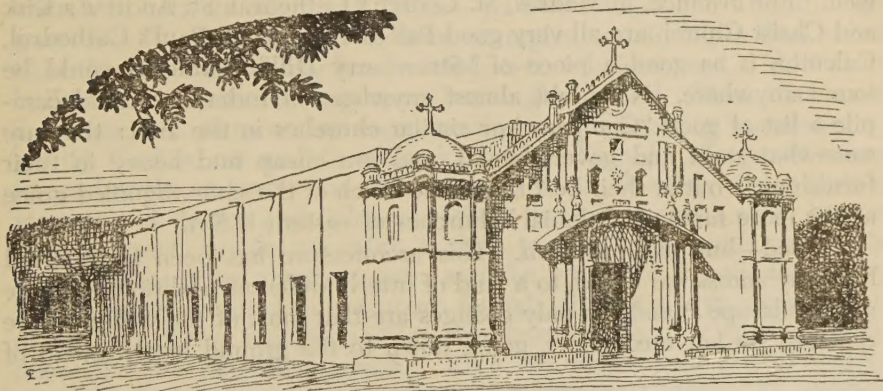


FIG. 1—Holy Rosary Church, Tejgaon, near Dacca.

¹ However, *v. infr.*, sec. C, para. 5.

² Manueline dates between 1495 and 1521 in its metropolitan area; it continued longer in the remoter parts of Portugal. The earliest churches at Goa are dated 1510 and 1513, and are not in that style. There never seems to have been much Manueline in Portuguese India; the only pieces now extant are the west doorway of São Francisco at Goa (the sole remains of the original church of 1521), parts of the Church of the Priorado do Rocário at Goa (1543), and fragments of a small church and a doorway in Dio (Diu). (C6, 9; C9; personal observation at Goa; information from Dr. M. T. Chicó about Diu.)

³ D1; C8, 4.

⁴ A7; D3; A6, 56, 58, 65; illustrations to A5, C6; C7; C8; C10; personal knowledge of the (unpublished) Madras churches.

So far as major architectural features go, the style of these buildings is entirely Portuguese, with two exceptions only. These are: the isolated arch in front of the Cathedral façade at Goa, which is the sole surviving fragment of the early Palace of the Viceroy; and the façade of the Holy Rosary Church at Tejgaon, near Dacca (1677):¹ in these there are real blends of Portuguese with Gujerati and Bengali features respectively.

In some smaller decorative features of the buildings, there is indeed some blending of the styles. The most notable example of this is the tomb-plaque of Dona Catarina de Sá in the Priory Church of the Rosário at Old Goa:² and elsewhere at Old Goa and in the Goa Territory there are many cases of subtle infiltration of Indian motifs and treatments, as indeed was inevitable when most of the labour force was Indian.³ Such partial Indianization of architectural details is of a piece with the frequent, and in many cases full, mixture of the styles, in British as well as in Portuguese India, in pictures and in the 'minor arts' of furniture, tapestries, ecclesiastical silverware, etc.⁴ Under different circumstances, this mixture might have been the beginning of a true blend of the cultures of East and West;⁵ but in actual fact it led to no very high achievement even in the minor arts, and left the major art of architecture almost unaffected.

The Protestants began their building in India much later than the Portuguese: their oldest church in the East, St. Mary's in Fort St. George, Madras, dates from 1680. They also in the old days generally built very well. For instance, in Madras, St. George's Cathedral, St. Andrew's Kirk and Christ Church are all very good Palladian; and St. Paul's Cathedral, Calcutta, is as good a piece of 'Strawberry Hill' Gothic as could be found anywhere. No doubt almost anywhere in India one could compile a list of good 'Company' or similar churches in the area: they are somewhat staid and governmental, and are cheap and heavy in their furnishings; but at their best they have much of the same dignified grace as the more famous 'Colonial' churches of eastern U.S.A.

Good—but pure western. This architecture has been transported half-way across the world, to a land of utterly different traditions, climate and landscape;⁶ and the only changes are that most of the windows are replaced by louvered doors, going down to the ground level instead of

¹ C14, 270; information from Fr. Timm. There is apparently also some assimilation in the smaller country churches in parts of Goa Territory (C5; C6, 10—but we await A7).

² C9, 5, 7-8 and pl. 3.

³ C8, 7-9 and pls. 1, 3, 4; C6, 10-1; A5, 13.

⁴ A1; A3; A6, 59, 61, 63; C2; C4; C5; C11; C12; C14, 279-81 (this greatly overstates the case for Italian responsibility for the Taj Mahal); D3; E1; H6; H7, 21-2, 510-24 and pl. 48; I2; I3; I4; I5; I6; K2; L1, pls. 66-7 and p. 232; M1; P1; W1. (The originals nearly always show the blending more clearly than do the photographs). The taste spread to the West: e.g. C3: indeed, the influence always was a two-way one—that is the main lesson of the careful research of E1; G3.

⁵ It is significant that Goa, the collecting station for all the eastern trade with the West, felt Chinese influence also in this period: D3, 7-11 and pls. 8-11; E1, 69, 71, 189; probably also A6, 57-8.

⁶ L1, 45; B3, 24.

ending at raised sills, so that the heat is not intensified by glass and air-flow is more available and more controllable.¹

For the most part modern churches have been less successful. The Georgian standards of good taste, pedestrian but sound, lingered longer in India than in England—'the outposts of Empire' being always more conservative than the metropolis. But ultimately Victorian vulgarity and confusion did reach India. And so Catholics in modern India have put up some dreadful pseudo-Gothic bits of wedding-cake, and Protestants some very dreary Bethels. There have been exceptions: for instance, the Cathedral of Medak is a fine building in a slightly and intelligently modernized Gothic. But good new work in the western traditional styles is now rare in India. Most of the good modern Christian buildings have been experiments in adaptation: and we thus pass naturally to the matter of our next two Sections.

C. POSSIBLE MODELS IN HINDUISM

Hinduism is the most autochthonous of the developed Indian religions, and accordingly the two main Hindu styles (northern and southern) are the most indigenous of the Indian religious building styles. It is natural, then, to look first to the temple as a possible model for a Christian church of an indigenous type.

There is, however, an obstacle arising from the differing purposes of temple and church—and, while extreme functionalism is false, no one nowadays denies that function must be taken very seriously into account in architecture. The Hindu temple differs radically from the Christian church in both its origin and its use—its heavenward and its earthward purpose. In origin, it is, in its finest examples, an offering to God rather than the fulfilment of any human need, even religious need. Most of its bulk, often vast, serves no purpose but to glorify God. Now, that is not a meaningless purpose, or an unworthy one: Christians too desire to glorify God in art and to make lovely buildings in His praise—they remember the alabaster box of ointment. But in this they seek a certain manner and degree and balance. When there is so much sheer human need to meet, we do not think it right to spend vast sums on beauty unaccompanied by mundane use: and the beauty of a building comes, for Christian sacramentalism, more fittingly from a simple organization of the lines of that building's utility than from the heaping up of a merely decorative pile like the *gopuram*.² From the origin of the Hindu temple, then, we find in one way an excess over the true mean. In another respect, we find a paucity, due to differing purposes. A temple is a building where the idol can have ceremonies performed on the analogy of the court life of a *rājā*, and where worshippers can come singly or in small groups to do *pūjā* and have *darśan*. In the bigger temples there must indeed be much space, to accommodate crowds at pilgrimage times and permit various subsidiary functions: but there is no congregational worship or preaching in the Christian sense, and therefore no

¹ A further change is the use round Madras of the fine, and I believe now unreproducible, 'egg-shell *chunam*'. A parallel in old Portuguese India was the use, in windows and cloisters, of mother-of-pearl 'glazing'. But perhaps both these had European prototypes.

² This, I admit, implies a criticism of Medak Cathedral tower.

need for the special kind of spaciousness which a Christian church requires.

Hence the better-known types of Hindu temple can hardly be models for Christian churches. Hindus themselves must judge of their fitness by the norms of their own purposes: but for our purposes they would be too large in extent, too small in covered space with a clear view forwards, too ornate, too unfunctional, too airless. The nearest approach in a Christian church to a close copy of one of these types is the *jebalayam* at the Kristu-kula *āśrama* at Tirupattur.¹ Even there, the actual worship-chamber is more of a free adaptation than a copy: of the more purely indigenous parts, the *gopuram* is almost completely unfunctional, and the ornate *vimāna* largely so. Experiments and gestures of inter-group understanding are badly needed in this strife-torn age; so it is good that this particular experiment and gesture has been made; but it is probably not desirable that it should be repeated.

This, however, does not mean that the Hindu temple cannot at all serve as a model for the Christian church in India. The Hindu temple, indeed, is so various in form that it would be surprising if models could not be found in it for almost anything! There are several types or aspects or developments of the temple that look specially promising for our purposes: in some cases experience has proved their fittingness.

1. *The box-shaped small temple* can be well adapted. One pleasing example of this is the chapel of the Theological School at Tumkur, in Mysore State,² which is especially interesting as showing how, though the main appeal of much Hindu architecture is in its richness, yet there are in it basic lines which will stand the test of simple treatment, and which with this simplification, together with other adaptations, can yield a thoroughly satisfactory Christian building. Tumkur uses the Mysore style: there is a satisfactory treatment of the northern style tower at the parish church of Meharauli, Delhi: so far as I can judge from photographs, the Tamil style is used effectively at the chapels of the Bishop's Theological College, Tirumaraiyur, and of the Social Centre for Women, Vellore;³ but with a rather dull and heavy effect, perhaps through too much effort at simplification, in the chapel of the Christian Mission Hospital at Madurai; and the northern style has been well used by the Roman Catholics in their church at Mokameh in the Patna Diocese.⁴

2. There are types of temple *maṇḍapam*, and of the closely-connected *open-hall type of village shrine*, which can serve us almost directly as models. An outstandingly successful example of this is the chapel of the Bentinck Girls' High School at Vepery, Madras. Not dissimilar churches have resulted in Ceylon from adaptations of the secular audience-hall of the Kandyan kings, in the chapels of Trinity College, Kandy, and of the Training Colony at Peradeniya.⁵ In both Ceylon and India the *maṇḍapam* has secular uses, and this is held an advantage for

¹ F1, 65-6; F3, 48-52, 64; L1, 50-1, 233 and pls. 85-6.

² F3, 61.

³ F3, 56-7, 62-3.

⁴ C1, 125. For other Roman experiments in India, v. C13; G1; H1; H2; H3; L2; L3; S1; T1; VI.

⁵ F1, 80-1; F3, 54-5; S3, Chap. v; L1, 52, 234 and pl. 94.

adaptation, in reducing the volume of non-Christian associations ;¹ against this must be set the practical disadvantages of openness during monsoons.

3. *The halls of some Hindu sects and societies* are erected for congregational purposes not unakin to our own, and are worthy of study, as being the work of thoroughly Indian minds trying to solve our very problem. Two fine instances are the temple of the Belur Maṭh near Calcutta, the headquarters of the Ramakrishna Mission, and the chapel of the revived Buddhist community at Sarnath.

4. India has *various syncretistic styles*, which may give us clues as to sound ways of adaptation. Syncretism is not always sterile ; it can be fruitful new beginning. Some even contend that the superb Mughal style of Delhi and Agra is a synthesis of Persian and Hindu styles : unquestionably there are in the 'provinces' many fine types of synthesis of Muslim and Hindu styles, as in the mosques of Jaunpur, and the tomb of Tipu Sultan at Seringapatam. Especially instructive, for our purposes, are the examples of synthesis of Hindu and European styles, as in the street of the fast-decaying houses of the *zamindārs* at Kalahasti ; the *Kalyāṇa-maṇḍapam* on the roof of the Thousand-Pillared *Maṇḍapam* in the Ekāmbaranātha Temple at Kāñcī ; the pedimented façade of the Viṣṇu Temple at Kalighat, Calcutta ; and the eighteenth-century temples in the Pondá area of Goa, notably at Queulá and Sirodá.² There is even, in the late style of the *Nāyaks* at Madurai and Tanjore and Gingee, a synthesis of Hindu, Muslim and European, which is of particular interest for its use, in buildings primarily Hindu in spirit, of the vault, which is so rare in pure Hindu work. It is true that none of these syntheses is itself in the front rank of artistic achievement, nor did any of them lead on to any full development ; but the possibilities are there. It may be that most of our indigenizing experiments have been too purist, that the syntheses here mentioned point to a possible way, and that thus Bishop Azariah, whatever the quality of his particular achievement at Dornakal Cathedral, was right in attempting a blend of Hindu and Muslim there.³

5. I think it is probable that proper research might show that for one region our problem was really solved long ago—that the ancient '*Syrian*' Church of Malabar, established for itself, in the mediaeval period, a satisfactory adaptation of the local Hindu temple-form. I understand that the oldest buildings of this Church have been much rebuilt in post-Portuguese times, but yet that fragments of pre-Portuguese work are incorporated in some of them. Investigation might confirm that these fragments belong to buildings of local form : I have been told this in vague terms, and it seems borne out by the detached carvings which have been published.⁴ Here is a field for much-needed research by a Malayalam-speaking scholar, preferably one belonging himself to the Syrian Church.⁵

¹ L1, 50 ; G2.

² A5, 13-4 ; A6, 57-8.

³ F1, 70-3 ; F3, 47 ; L1, 51-2 and pl. 87.

⁴ B1, pl. lxi ; J1 ; H7, i. A, iii, 2, 3, 6, vi, 1, and relevant illustrations (pls. 9-12, 25, 26, 28-34, 36-8, 41, 44-6).

⁵ I am not aware that anything at all has been published on the architecture of these ancient churches. A few years ago a Malabari Carmelite called on me in Selly Oak, told me he was researching on this architecture and promised to keep me in touch with his work ; but I have not heard from him since. May I appeal to local scholars for photographs and information about these pre-Portuguese remains ?

D. POSSIBLE MODELS IN ISLAM

When Christians adapt the art of any non-Christian faith, there are always theological dangers. With Hinduism, the main danger was that of being drawn into or associated with its syncretism; with Islam, it is that of sharing in a monotheism which rejects Christ and all that flows from Him. In addition, there is a slight legal danger of our arches being in some circumstances treated as mosques, and political danger in some areas of the popular view associating us too closely with one community as against another. Against these risks, of course, must be set the great and increasing danger of foreignness.

To turn from the dangers to the opportunities—these are very great. True, many mosques that we think of as typical would not be suitable for copying by Christians. For instance, I would not like to have to hear a sermon or watch an Eucharist from a back corner of a courtyard modelled on that of the Jamā' Masjid of Delhi. The *mezquita* of Córdoba was indeed turned into a Christian cathedral; but it is a terribly bad one for practical purposes, and in fact only the *coro*, intruded into it by Christians in the sixteenth century, is used at all nowadays, except for quite isolated chapels. (It cannot, I think, have been previously very good as a mosque; and a Christian cathedral such as that of Lincoln is far from ideal as a 'great church' for a modern diocese.)

Nevertheless, the mosque has the potentialities of being a good model for a church. This is not surprising in view of the origin of its main form, in Christian churches of the Byzantine area or of Armenia; nor is its purpose so very different from that of the church, particularly for Protestants, since Islam is in origin simply an early Puritan heresy of Christianity.¹ Hence historically much interchange of buildings between the faiths has been possible. Some types of mosque have many elements borrowed from churches.² In Spain many a mosque has (though we may regret the means) made a very satisfactory church; and in the Byzantine area (by equally regrettable history) many a church has made a very satisfactory mosque, the most famous example being Sancta Sophia at Constantinople; in Cyprus even some Gothic churches, despite their less Islamic nature and greater difficulties of orientation, are so used.³ In Spain Gothic and Moorish fused in Mozarabic and the lovely new *mudéjar* style;⁴ in southern Portugal the Islamic horseshoe arch⁵ appears in what is otherwise Gothic or Manueline. Normally indeed a church requires a fuller chancel than the tiny *mihṛāb* (which indeed in architectural origin is a vestigial chancel);⁶ but *mudéjar* shows how this can be added without any violence to the spirit of an Islamic style.

There are, I think, five ways in which the mosque, or other type of Islamic building, could provide a model for a church:

(1) It is possible simply to copy the mosque which is rectangular in shape and fully roofed.⁷ This has been done beautifully at All Saints'

¹ It was so treated by St. John of Damascus.

² E3, 379a, 380a, b, 381a, 385b, 386a, 388a. Cf. the controversy in B4, 159.

³ E3, 320-1.

⁴ B2, esp. Chaps. v and xii; E2; II.

⁵ Islamic with reservations—v. B2, 7, 9.

⁶ E3, 338.

⁷ Though Card. Costantini disapproves: C14, 373.

Memorial Church, Peshawar¹ (and in Persia at the Church of St. Simon the Zealot, Shiraz).² (Indeed, in the seventeenth century the Armenians at Julfa were building their churches in the style of the local mosques.)³

(2) Another style of Muslim building, the great tomb-hall, as in the great row of royal tombs at Allahabad, would, I think, provide a fine type of hall for Christian purposes (though wasteful in height). I feel that the designs of the fine chapel of the Women's Christian College, Madras, and (from photographs) Wesley Church, Hyderabad, though both in different ways somewhat Byzantine in style, may owe something to such tombs: and at Lahore the tomb of Jahāngīr's mistress Anārkalī (1615) was actually the Christian church of St. James between 1857 and 1887.

(3) There have been experiments in the incorporation of Islamic elements in churches mainly of the normal western type, as at Dudgaon Central Church, Hyderabad State.⁴

(4) I would like specially to recommend as a model a form of one of India's commonest types of mosque, the smallish courtyard mosque.

Such a building would serve us quite well functionally, and would suit both the climate and our economic state. The part corresponding to the actual mosque building, if made shallow and wide, can give a good view of the altar and a reasonable hearing of the preacher to a small courtyard surrounded by a wide colonnade with narrow pillars. In such a colonnade quite a large congregation can be accommodated under roofed shade; for the rest, in the courtyard itself, shade from the sun is provided by the walls and by trees, at the times when we normally hold our services; admittedly this is inadequate during monsoons; but this does not affect too many Sundays or our major festivals. Such a church can be of great beauty; if the courtyard walls are pierced with grille-windows of the lovely Mughal type,⁵ it is cool and airy and yet reasonably private; it is of good size, and yet avoids that wide roof-span which is

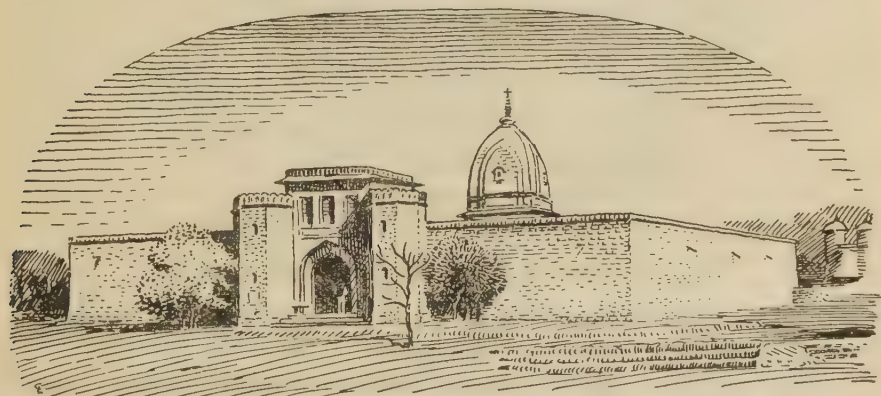


FIG. 2—St. John's Church, Meharauli, near Delhi.

¹ F1, 70-3; F3, 47; L1, 51, 233 and pl. 88. (The date is remarkable—1883.)

² F1, 66-9.

³ P2, II. 1200-1, IV. pl. 507 (the Cathedral, 1663).

⁴ L1, 234 and pl. 92; v. also *supr.*, C(4).

⁵ Modern Christian windows of this type are at the Divinity School, Stevenson College, Ahmadabad (F1, 92-3; L1, 233 and pl. 84), and in the chancel at Tumkur. The same borrowing was accomplished long ago in Spain: v. B2, 23-4 and pl. III, and index s.v. '*transennae*'.

what makes the ordinary big church so expensive ; it can contain the normal congregation in full comfort according to Indian ways, yet without making it look like a forlorn remnant in a vast building, and there is still adequate accommodation for the festival crowds.

Much, of course, depends on apparent details of the design—adjustable piercings of some walls to allow either breeze or shelter ; shade of trees or awnings in the open space ; lightness and proper placing of pillars ; etc. If such matters are not carefully thought out, then the criticisms of the conservatives will have only too much legitimate weight. I tentatively venture to suggest something like Fig. 2, which is based on mingled memories of Jaunpur in India, Granada in Spain and pictures of the churches mentioned below.

Within my knowledge, five churches of this type have been built in North and Central India recently—St. Andrew's, Ummedpur, and St. Philip and St. James', Pak Bara, both in the Moradabad District and Lucknow Diocese ; St. John's, Meharauli, near Delhi ; St. Francis', Karanji,

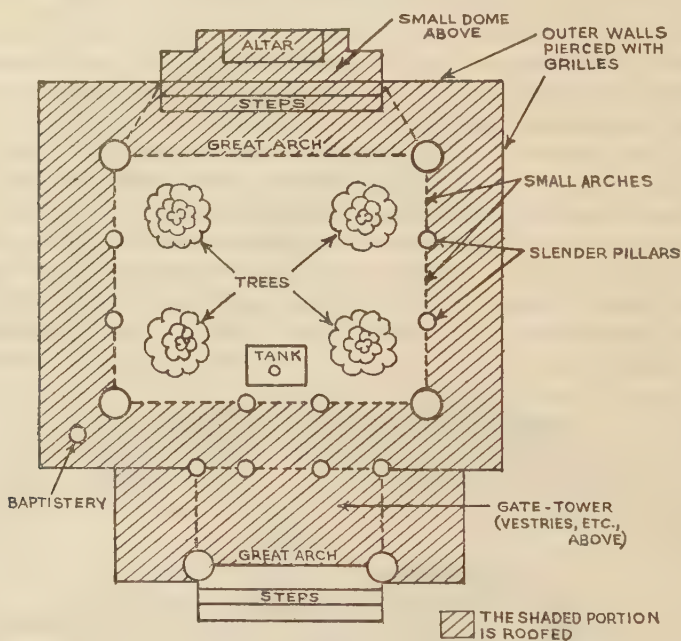


FIG. 3—Rough Plan of suggested Courtyard Church.

in the District and Diocese of Nasik ; and Nirmal Church of the Medak Diocese of the C.S.I. (formerly Methodist).

In each case the result has been a building of really pleasing appearance. I do not know how the experiment has fared in other respects at the first three of those churches. I am told that at Nirmal it has the special merit of fitting in well with the development of church life in Hyderabad State which specially stresses *jatras*.¹ But at Karanji, I am informed, it has failed: on normal days the whole congregation would sit under cover in the roofed part running along the east wall of the court ; on festival days the extra congregation that used the courtyard

¹ Letter of Rev. H. W. Sibree Page, dated 4th April, 1956.

found it either too cold or too wet or too hot ; so the experiment has been abandoned, by the courtyard being roofed in :¹ I am surprised and uneasy at this. After all, the Muslims use open courts without complaint.² The covered, the *qiblah*, end of their mosque holds the congregation at the ordinary prayer-times, and the courtyard takes the extra congregation on Fridays and at *Id*. Some of the prayer-times are indeed short and at shady hours ; but the Friday prayers at midday, and these and the *Id* prayers are often long ; but cloth or *tatti* awnings seem to suffice for shade. It is difficult and invidious to try and judge these matters at a distance ; but I would need some persuading that either the Karanji people or their leaders were not either too conservative, or given to over-lengthy services, or unlucky in the practical details of their design, or weighed down by some combination of these.

(5) I would like to go further, and suggest, at any rate for the first Christian buildings in newly-evangelized villages, an even more open type of church, which might be said to be the Christian counterpart of the Muslim *idgāh*, the prayer-wall which gives the correct orientation.³ We Christians do not indeed so greatly need the orientation : on the other hand, we do for various reasons mostly need more than a mere wall : I cannot but think that the completely open prayer-platforms or shade-gables with which some Indian village congregations have experimented⁴ are inadequate except for ultra-Protestants. But there is much to be said for a cheap beginning with an 'open chapel', which covers the altar and a small portion of ground for celebrant and preacher, can be shut up between services to avoid profanation, and during services is open to a congregation outside. Such an 'open chapel' can, as and when the local situation comes to justify it, easily be added to and made into a 'courtyard church'.

Actually, this solution has once been tried on an ancient mission field, and has led to some beautiful results. In Spanish Mexico, roughly between the years 1540 and 1555, several towns had, previously to, or at the side of, the great conventual church, an 'open chapel'. This would shelter the celebrant, and sometimes a small congregation besides ; at the west it is open to the great church square, where a congregation of almost any size could muster, with a full view of the altar. Presumably there were movable wooden fences and gates to close these chapels up after service. There survive some beautiful little chapels built in this way : in fact, they form the one distinctive contribution of Mexico to Spanish architecture.⁵ They do not seem to have been long in use : it is not clear either why they became fashionable or why they ceased to be built—perhaps population waned, big covered churches were erected, an increase in the number of clergy rendered vast congregations unnecessary, the strict Roman Canon Law about open-air altars was

¹ Letter of the Archdeacon of Ahmednagar, Ven. B. S. de W. Batty, dated 16th March, 1954.

² Such was the earliest custom ; and modern Persian Muslims are said, in reasonable weather conditions, to *prefer* the open to the covered part of a mosque (P2, I. 909).

³ Perhaps this is the prototype of all mosques except the one at Mecca (E3, 332).

⁴ F1, 74-7 ; L1, 52.

⁵ K1, I. 225 and Fig. 99, II. 231, 269, 299, 307, 314-41, 422-3, 430-1, 455 and related pictures.



FIG. 4—*Tepogcolula, view of open chapel.*

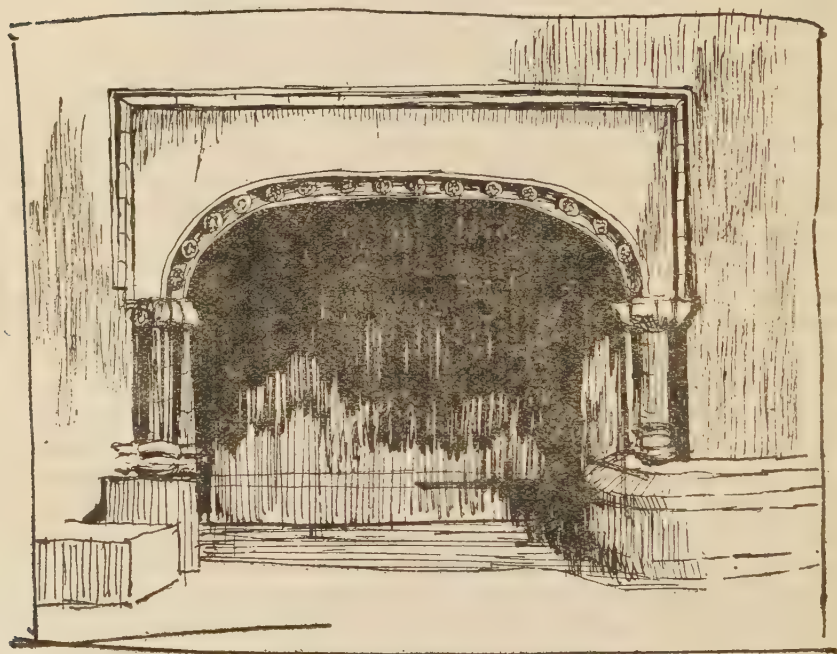


FIG. 5—*Tepeji Del Rio, view of open chapel.*

enforced, or maybe they never had been intended for anything but interim use.¹ They are indeed something of a mystery, and the investigation of them has scarcely begun.

¹ KI, II. 269, 307, 314-5, 322-5, 337-8, 422-3. (For the modern Roman Catholic law on the subject, v. *Codex Juris Canonici* (1917) Canon 822, paras. 1, 4: ancient authorities lie behind that.

I am not aware of any systematic use of such chapels outside this short phase in Mexico ; and indeed I only know of one other instance of them, and this happens to be in the Indian sub-continent. In the fort that crowns the cliff at Mormugão, the main port of the Territory of Goa, is the Chapel of St. Mary, dated 1624. It is just a niche in a wall, the wall of a ramp leading from a level space on the top of a tower on to a battlement at a higher level of the fortifications. Its niche only just holds



FIG. 6—*St. Mary's Chapel, Mormugão.*

the altar, but it has a wooden grille to protect it from birds and animals. At the other, the seaward, end of the open tower-top is a cross such as the Portuguese commonly have in front of their churches. The congregation must have stood in the open between the priest and that cross. It is a lovely place for worship in the still cool of dawn.

E. POSSIBILITIES IN MODERNISM

What now of Thesis 6 in Section A? Will these problems of indigenization be swept aside for churches by the new 'functional' ferro-concrete style, which India apparently accepts for factories, office-buildings and suburban houses ?

If so, then the prospect is at first sight dim, from an indigenizing Christian's point of view. In the West, the style is in origin and essential nature secular: if it is capable of real religious development, it has not yet found this power, at any rate not in any definitive mode; and it seems hard if the West is to subject other parts of the world to its own confusion. The style claims to be international rather than western; but it did in fact originate in the West, and seems unlikely to satisfy what is real in national feeling.

Yet this style may bring us a new opportunity. It may well be that our problem of finding a worthy Christian architecture for India will be solved better in an atmosphere of adventurous trial of quite new things than in one of patch and compromise among the old. Nor is it certain that the new style is international in any way destructive of proper national distinctiveness: for instance, the Mexican skyscraper is said already to be no mere copy of New York but definitely Mexican: and all sorts of possibilities will open out as modern architecture rids itself, as it will, of an excessively rigid functionalist theory and really faces the problem of ornament. And it may well prove capable of religious expression: there has been much experiment about this, particularly in France:¹ and indeed the only sound way for religious art anywhere is to give religious form to contemporary idioms, not to play with archaistic escapisms.

In West Africa, whose building problems are fruitfully comparable with those of India, interesting experiments have been made in the secular adaptation of the style to tropical conditions;² the same has been done in India itself, at the new Punjab State capital of Chandigarh.³ As for the religious application of this style, in Africa the chapel of Ibadan University College and the new cathedral of the Niger Diocese at Onitsha adapt the new techniques fully to the climate of their neighbourhood and partially to the traditional forms of its buildings. In India, I am not aware of any achievement in religious ferro-concrete that could guide us. It is true that the new Birla Temple at New Delhi uses the modern materials, but it does so only to copy the traditional style, and that badly: at St. Thomas' Mount near Madras the Tamil C.S.I. (ex-Methodist) Church attempts a more original translation of ancient motifs into the forms of the new material, but it is one of the ugliest buildings I know. Thus we have an almost virgin field for experiment.⁴ In particular, we can hope that ultimately ferro-concrete will solve the problem of how to build in an Indian way without getting entangled in the controversies as to the rights and merits of various regional Indian styles.⁵

¹ A4. Bitter controversy has been aroused by these experiments; and the hierarchy's official ruling is a monument of confident non-committal. It is curious that those most liberal about the possibilities of Christianizing indigenous arts seem to have no hope that the Spirit can similarly work in 'twentieth-century art': C14, 105-18, B3, 8 (Bp. Grente), 126-9.

² A2.

³ At Chandigarh, it is said, a policy of social reform makes the buildings deliberately flout certain traditional Indian customs: but this should not obscure the fact that in other ways they seek the fullest integration with their Indian setting.

⁴ It is important and relevant that several art educators are actively thinking along the lines of blending the indigenous and the international: Z1, 103-10.

⁵ V., e.g. L1, 50.

F. CONCLUSION

On the academic side, this study is very incomplete: it is more a plea for information and debate from others than a presentation of any full scholarship or formed views. I shall indeed be most grateful if it provokes others to give me facts or photographs which will increase my knowledge of the material relevant to these problems, and comment and criticism which will help my thinking about them.

On the practical side, I have (apart from my partiality for the courtyard church and open chapel) little to propose but experiment, tolerance and forward-mindedness. What else could I offer? Art developments cannot be forecast; they happen; and they happen in artists, not in scholars or critics; and art developments within a nation happen through the nationals, not through interested foreigners. Thus, in this matter of Indian church building, all that one who is neither an artist nor an Indian can do is to ask Indian Christians to be awake to the dangers of the present foreignness, and awake to the fine possibilities latent in the problem, and then to shed fears and encourage experiment. Then, almost automatically, yet under the leading of God's Spirit, modern Indian Christianity will find the Indian and the modern answer to the problem of its building style.

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Tranquebar Then and Now*

H. W. GENSICHEN

Tranquebar Then and Now is the title of the little historical guide which most of you may have in your hands. 'Tranquebar Then and Now' may also be a suitable heading in order to guide us in assessing the significance of this Quarter-Millennium Jubilee of the Tranquebar Mission for the Church and its mission at large. Jubilees are land-marks set up here and there beside the path of the pilgrim church in this world, and they convey a dual message. First, a jubilee is a mark of exclamation: 'Bless the Lord, oh my soul, and forget not all His benefits.' Secondly, it is a question-mark: 'Do you not know that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?' Thus this present Tranquebar Jubilee, too, should not just be a commemoration of past events but also a challenge, an occasion for thanksgiving as well as for stock-taking and heart-searching. We are not supposed to take history for granted. It is part of our Christian freedom to put questions to our past. At the same time it is part of our Christian obedience to listen to the questions which the past may have to put to us.

'Tranquebar Then and Now'—this subject, then, would suggest a dialogue rather than a mere description of historic events, and it is my intention to point to certain issues which may profitably be discussed in the course of such a dialogue on the occasion of this Tranquebar Jubilee.

The very church building in which we are meeting stimulates thought about the first issue. It was not the first mission church in Tranquebar. But it stands even today as a symbol of Ziegenbalg's determination to make the Church the aim of the mission, a determination which he had to maintain not only against violent opposition from the ultra-Pietistic mission secretary in Copenhagen but also against certain criticisms from the fathers in Halle. In this respect Ziegenbalg was certainly not a genuine Pietist. For as a rule Pietism was emphasizing the idea of the Kingdom of God rather than the idea of the Church. Count Zinzendorf, the leader of the Moravian Community, who as a youth had seriously thought of joining the Tranquebar Mission, has later clearly defined the aim of a mission work which is centered in the idea of the Kingdom of God: His missionaries should strictly confine themselves to what he called 'gathering individual souls for the Lamb'. Since then we find a Pietistic type of mission work which maintained this individualistic emphasis and strove to build the Kingdom rather than the Church. But later on, when at last the churches as such discovered their missionary responsibility, there was a shift of emphasis from the individualistic to the corporate aspect, from the Kingdom to the Church, and the two tendencies

* An address given at the New Jerusalem Church, Tranquebar, on January 13, 1956.

have since co-existed in the history of missions but never been fully reconciled.

The early Tranquebar missionaries were well aware of the problem. But they were able to find a constructive and workable solution. As a Pietist Ziegenbalg had learned in Halle that to win one single soul among the non-Christians was as good as winning a hundred at home, and he was always conscious that ultimately he was labouring for the cause of the Kingdom. Yet as a Lutheran he was no less certain that those who had been won should be gathered and incorporated in the church. For to him it was the church in which the sinner received forgiveness and Christ exercised his lordship in this world. It literally worried him to death that the secretary of the Copenhagen home-board tried to eliminate this church-consciousness from the Tranquebar Mission, and he knew full well that the opposition which he encountered when building New Jerusalem Church was just a symptom of the underlying conflict of principles. But neither Ziegenbalg nor his successors were willing to give in. In the Tranquebar Mission Pietism and Lutheranism, the emphasis on individual conversion and the emphasis on the church, have joined forces, and it is of lasting importance that here the painful alternative of both principles, which later on caused so much unnecessary friction, was from the beginning converted into the kind of alliance of both which alone is true to the testimony of the Scriptures.

This leads immediately on to another issue which may be summed up in the alternative, 'Denominational or Ecumenical'. If the Tranquebar Mission was to grow into a church, what kind of a church was it to be? It was the Lutheran King of Denmark, Frederick IV, who sponsored and patronized the Tranquebar Mission, both by his personal initiative and through the influence of his Lutheran court preacher Luetkens. The missionaries received the Lutheran ordination. In Tranquebar itself catechumens were instructed according to the Lutheran catechism, and the order of worship followed the pattern of the Lutheran Church of Denmark. It was never doubtful that the church which was to grow out of the mission was to be of a Lutheran character. When soon after Ziegenbalg's death one or two missionaries attempted to introduce the Book of Common Prayer or the Anglican catechism, their colleagues protested in no uncertain terms.

One may deplore that the very beginnings of Protestant mission work in India and, for that matter, in the whole world were thus associated with a particular denomination, and we may even be inclined to frown on what may look like a spirit of confessionalism in the Tranquebar Mission. However, confessionalism is one thing and confession another. When in the early years of the mission some friends in England were afraid of what they described as 'sectarian Lutheranism' in the Tranquebar Mission, their suspicions were soon dispelled to such an extent that they did not hesitate to send gifts in cash and kind to Tranquebar, among them the first printing press (1712). In fact, this support from England was only the beginning of a truly harmonious co-operation of Anglicans and Lutherans of which the encouraging letters of the Archbishop of Canterbury and the English king to the first missionaries give impressive evidence. Obviously not denominational propaganda was intended by the Tranquebar missionaries but, in the words of one of the fathers in Halle, 'a common evangelical effort of conversion', in which, by the way,

also the Calvinistic Dutch in India and Ceylon were to have their share.

To be sure, Ziegenbalg and his successors did never mean to discard their Lutheranism like a worn-out garment. They knew that India with all its leanings towards syncretism was specially in need of a clear and definite truth, and they were convinced to have such a truth to offer in the message of the Bible as interpreted in the Lutheran confessions. Yet for them it was the message that mattered, not the confessional appearance as an end in itself. Therefore they were able to think and act in a truly ecumenical broad-mindedness, without yielding the solid ground of their Lutheran convictions—an attitude which even now deserves respect though it can hardly be expected to offer a definite solution of the complex ecumenical problems of our age.

Today the old Danish Lutheran Zion Church, just opposite Ziegenbalg's New Jerusalem Church, belongs to the Church of South India after having been turned over to the S.P.G. when in 1845 Tranquebar was sold to the British. Ziegenbalg would never have dreamt that the divided state of Protestantism would appear in such a way even in his beloved Tranquebar. Just for that reason the Indian church of today might derive new inspiration from the attitude of the old missionaries who, with all their unflinching loyalty to the truth as they had come to know it, never lost sight of the oneness of the Church of Christ and of its Great Commission.

All this may raise another question: Can an indigenous church of our age at all be expected to take advice from a mission of the past whose work may appear to be hopelessly bound up with a completely out-moded 'mission station approach' in which there seems to be no room for the idea of an integration of the church and the mission? Indeed, if there has ever been a mission enterprise which was pioneer work in the strict sense, it was here, and that would imply that at least in the beginnings all the initiative rested with the missionaries. They had no examples to follow, no patterns to copy, in the earliest years also no native co-workers to whom to delegate their authority, and that alone would be sufficient reason to be cautious in applying the standards of our age and insight to their work. It would be unreasonable to expect an indigenous church to emerge from such a mission as Pallas Athene emerged from the head of Zeus. But even then the problem remains: What about the integration of the mission and the church in Tranquebar? Is there any indication that the early Tranquebar missionaries were at least aware of the issue and, if so, that the development of our indigenous Indian churches can be said to be in line with what the pioneers intended?

The answer to this question must be in the affirmative. There is no room here to describe the various ways and means in which the Tranquebar missionaries deliberately worked for an Indian church as the desired fruit of their mission work. But it should at least be recalled that the early history of the mission in itself offers the most striking evidence, though it has often been neglected by historians whose eyes were fixed on what the Western missionaries accomplished themselves. For almost half a century the latter could work in the narrow limits of the Danish territory and in the two rather isolated outposts of Madras and Cuddalore only. Nevertheless there was a steady growth of the

work also to the west and to the south, in regions which remained closed to Europeans for a considerable period. This was due exclusively to the faithful work of the Indian helpers and to the spontaneous witness of the native Christians. The names of most of them have long been forgotten, and no accurate statistics allow us to assess the extent of that expansion. But the great history of Protestant work in the districts of Tanjore and Tinnevely still stands out as a lasting memorial of the fact that the road on which the Gospel went out from Tranquebar into large parts of South India was in those early days not marked by mission stations but rather by the humble meeting places and mud chapels of the unknown village Christians. This was perhaps a more lasting contribution to the integration of the mission and the church than many a deliberate strategical move on the part of the missionaries, though the latter certainly deserve credit for encouraging and promoting this process of the growth of a church to the best of their ability.

The fact that the early Tranquebar missionaries were not working under the rigid directions and regulations of a home-board in Europe was another important factor in this development. One may perhaps even say that much of the modern ideal missionary team work was already anticipated and put into practice in the rather loose organizational structure of the old Tranquebar Mission.

All this does not mean that all the problems of the relation of mission and church had been solved. The training of Indian workers was never adequate to the demands of the field. Rajanaiken, one of the ablest catechists in the early period, did not receive ordination because of considerations of caste, and not before 1733 the ordination of the first Indian pastor was held. We may have our doubts whether the missionaries should not have shown less hesitation and more determination in building up an indigenous ministry. But considering the enormous difficulties which they had to face it is remarkable that they never lost sight of the aim and pursued it steadily, even in a period when the 'mission station approach' by necessity dominated their strategy. Today Tranquebar is no longer a mission station in the old sense. Not only here but also elsewhere the emphasis has indubitably and irrevocably shifted from the mission to the church, and we may confidently say that this development has taken place not against but in accordance with the real intentions of the pioneer missionaries.

If one speaks of an indigenous church one would do well to make it clear what is meant by that term. Everybody would agree that the Church in India cannot possibly be just a branch of Western Christendom on Indian soil. The Danish congregation in Tranquebar was such a branch, and the early missionaries could not but regard it as an example of the wrong way. They were determined to have an indigenous Church in the sense that it was 'in India's life and part of it'. But how to let it take root in Indian soil? There could be no doubts about the programme outlined by the apostle, 'to become all things to all men in order by all means to save some' (I Cor. 9:22). One had to meet the people on their own ground in order to win them. Robert de Nobili, the great pioneer of the Jesuit Mission of Madura, had gone to the extreme. He had posed as a Brahmin and proclaimed the Gospel to be the Fourth Veda that had been lost for many centuries. But was not that a kind of accommodation which sacrificed the truth to false pretences? Even

Protestant missions have occasionally yielded to this temptation. When Ziegenbalg wrote his book on the Genealogy of the Hindu Gods and sent it to Halle for publication, the venerable fathers there felt that he had already gone too far. Should he not rather fight Hinduism than study and describe it so that innocent souls in Europe might be misled? Consequently the manuscript remained unprinted for 150 years.

Obviously Ziegenbalg had shown more perspicacity than Francke and his colleagues in Halle. They were so afraid of an accommodation at the expense of the truth that they would not even allow for the necessary adjustment to the surroundings without which no missionary can work successfully. The Tranquebar missionaries had learned that there was a world of difference between the two. They were resolved to follow Paul in seeking and finding the people where they were, and in letting them hear the call of God right in the context of their real lives, without altering or compromising the Gospel message as such. Therefore they deemed it their obvious duty to acquire the fullest possible knowledge not only of the Tamil and Portuguese languages but also of the whole religious and social environment of the Hindus. In this they have set an example which has often been emulated but perhaps never really been excelled.

The first Protestant missionaries to India have indeed been the first Indologists—not because they were in need of a hobby for their spare time, but exclusively for the sake of their evangelistic commission. By the grace of God they have been able to lead the way to a kind of indigenization which, far from the dubious compromises of a syncretistic accommodation, allows the church to enter into the real life of the people. Neither they nor, for that matter, their successors up to this day have fulfilled this task which can probably only be completed by the Indian Church itself. But as initiators of this tremendous process they deserve not only respect but also attention even today.

To be sure, Ziegenbalg and his co-workers wasted no time in dreaming of posthumous fame. They were never desirous of the praise of men. If they ever allowed their imagination to travel ahead into the unknown future they envisaged their successors reaping a harvest for which they had done the sowing. This confidence was not rooted in an extravagant assessment of their own achievements but in the Biblical promise that a harvesting with joy will follow on a sowing with tears. If the early Tranquebar Mission had a secret it was certainly this that in all aspects of its work it corresponded to the spiritual law of growth under pressure; in other words, that it was a mission under the Cross.

If seen in this light, the 23 years of Ziegenbalg's life before his departure to India appear as a preparation for the path of the Cross through which the whole mission was to pass later on. Even the boy, orphaned in the early years of his life, had continuously to struggle with adversities from without and vexations from within. Hardly would any missionary society today be willing to accept such a candidate for overseas service—very young, without a completed training of any kind, of frail health and a somewhat ill-balanced frame of mind. But what he was to become he became in the school of the Cross. In Tranquebar there were the long and painful years of harassment by the Danish commandant—which, incidentally, saved the Tranquebar Mission from becoming a mission in the tow of colonialism—the lack of co-operation on the part of the secularized European congregation, including the

Danish pastors, and the open hostility of the Roman Catholics. No less disconcerting were the opposition from ultra-orthodox circles in Germany and, later on, the attacks launched against the mission by the secretary of its own royal home-board in Denmark. Finally, even in the inner circle of the missionaries tensions and frictions could not altogether be avoided, and time and again set-backs in the work and disappointing experiences with converts or even helpers threatened to paralyse the initial enthusiasm. If the work went on none the less it was, next to the grace of God, due to the patience and obedience of the pioneers with which they bore their cross and accepted all adversities as the 'fiery ordeal' which, according to the apostle, will inevitably come upon any Christian work to prove it. The later history of the mission in which eventually external decline and far-reaching hidden effects were strangely blended provides a confirming commentary to the experience of the pioneers.

But the Tranquebar Mission was a mission under the Cross also in another sense—not only in bearing the Cross but also in proclaiming it as the sign of salvation for all. It is interesting to note that the early missionaries were rather cautious in using the symbol of the Cross in their churches and otherwise. They knew that in India the Cross, and especially the crucifix, might only too easily be misinterpreted as an object of magic veneration. But the more determined were they to make the message of the Cross the centre of their life and work. They preached the Cross as the sign which, though inevitably spoken against in this world, is the sign of the hidden lordship of Jesus Christ, also in India. Whatever factors we may discover in which we gratefully find ourselves in continuity with the work of the pioneers—what ultimately matters is the continuity in the proclamation of the Cross in which all generations of the Church of Christ are one. However much we may feel compelled to go beyond their patterns and policies of mission work—they have pointed to the Cross also for our sake, and they could have left no better heritage. The words of one of the missionary leaders of our day, M. A. C. Warren, provide a fitting summary for our commemoration of the pioneers of the Tranquebar Mission: 'The roads which the missionaries of former generations built were not always straight or accurately cambered. But they were buried beside the road. And the road was built.'

Indigenization of Worship and its Psychology

S. P. ADINARAYAN

The Christian evangelist in India is faced with a problem which is to some extent peculiar to him. Whereas in many other countries his main task is to contend with the forces of agnosticism, atheism and indifference, here he has the added responsibility of facing the proximity of several highly developed religions like Hinduism, Buddhism and Islam and all that such a juxtaposition implies. In this disturbing yet exhilarating atmosphere, the Indian Christian reaffirms his faith in the fundamentals of his religion in no uncertain terms but after this is done is left with many perplexing matters of adjustment and detail. The situation is fraught with many a challenge. There are two possible reactions: 1. To experiment, examine and exchange. 2. To retreat, crystallize and conserve. Students of contemporary Christian thought in India have found evidence of both these tendencies at work. Much depends on background. The middle-aged convert from the higher castes has shown an inclination to bring with him into the Church part of his spiritual past and has insisted that this should be somehow co-opted into the main framework. Others have just adapted themselves to existing forms untroubled by memory or atavistic urge.

Psychologically speaking there is a sense of conflict inherent in the situation. This is between pride and fear. Pride in the serried splendour of his country's spiritual attainments and fear that any adoption of Hindu ideology may result in his own religion losing its characteristic content and eventually becoming a sub-sect of Hinduism.

The desire to indigenize Christian worship is but a corollary of the general situation described above. Besides the desire to make worship more acceptable to the convert and more attractive to the outsider, there is also the feeling present that there is much in it that is foreign and therefore unessential. The Christian community, which like the rest of India was greatly influenced by the wave of nationalism that passed over the country during the early decades of the present century, keenly felt the need to eliminate this exotic element in their mode of worship. Yet not all of them. A considerable number were of the opinion that the practices of the Church were neither Eastern nor Western but universal in nature and were anxious to preserve the sense of continuity implicit in the present forms of worship though they had reached the country via the West. Besides, there was the fear already referred to that indigenization may eventually lead to absorption.

Architecture, music, the language of liturgy, prayer and its poses have been some of the chief topics considered under the heading of the

indigenization of worship. Our main concern in this article is to look at these problems not from the general but from the psychological point of view, i.e. to undertake an examination of the motives and conflicts involved either in a desire for change or in a desire to maintain the *status quo*. We have already referred to one general conflict, that between pride and fear, and now we may briefly consider another in the narrower context of the posture adopted while praying. The general practice in most churches is to kneel. But some have objected to the introduction of this Jewish posture into Indian worship. As an alternative it has been suggested that the traditional Indian pose of *padmasana* should be adopted. But this is possible only if the worshippers squat on the ground and there are no benches or chairs about. Such conditions do not prevail in most city churches. Admittedly kneeling for any length of time is uncomfortable but to the average anglicized Indian Christian the *padmasana* is even more tortuous and in many cases impossible of attainment without the breaking of bones or at least the cracking of joints. Is this merely a matter of Jewish versus Indian? In my opinion a more fundamental issue is involved, that of comfort versus reverence. Deep down in the hearts of many of us there is the feeling that prayers offered while sitting down comfortably are not acceptable to God. I do not know whether there is any theological justification for this but psychologically speaking there is no doubt at all that there is a guilt feeling at work here. Some churches have evolved a compromise in bowing but this has not been a very acceptable solution. The non-conformist Christians of the United States have solved the problem by frankly taking the side of comfort. During my recent visit to the States I was often shocked to find people not even bowing during prayer and sometimes even sitting upright with crossed legs but who am I to say that their prayers are less acceptable to God than that of the kneelers or the squatters?

Personally I think that the significance of the foreignness of Indian Christian worship has been considerably exaggerated. A good sermon is a good sermon no matter in what kind of a building it is preached and in what position you sit while listening to it. The great hymns of the Church have thrilled everyone irrespective of one's capacity to appreciate or participate in Western music. Here let me digress for a moment to consider some of the criticisms that have been brought forward against certain hymns sung in our churches. Hymns like 'Take my life and let it be consecrated dear Lord to thee' should, it is claimed, be sung only by saintly persons. The average Christian comes very near to hypocrisy when he proclaims, 'Take my silver and my gold, not a mite will I withhold.' Psychologically speaking, singing hymns without meaning them creates a ritualistic and unhealthy attitude in religion. A second group of hymns seems to uphold a social order which judged by modern standards is essentially unchristian. For example, the states of both 'the rich man in his castle and the poor man at his gate' being attributed to God. A third set of hymns has become particularly odious to Indians because of the uncomplimentary remarks that they make about Eastern nations, like Bishop Heber's famous missionary hymn in which occurs the line 'Where every prospect pleaseth and man alone is vile'. Friends among the clergy in England have assured me that this is good theology (though undoubtedly bad manners) and that the vileness referred to is

that inherent in human nature as such. All the same it is unfortunate that the good bishop should have chosen an Eastern nation to illustrate so general a trait. Hymns belonging to the second and third categories are no longer a vital issue as they are rarely sung in our Churches today but the same cannot be said of the hymns belonging to the first group.

Recently the Christian Literature Society at Madras brought out a small booklet containing a list of Sanskrit words and terms suitable for use in Christian worship. This is a pioneering piece of work on which it deserves to be congratulated. Sanskrit words have a peculiar meaning and significance of their own and do succeed in making Christianity less foreign to the Hindu. To take but one example: to call our Lord the *paramapurusha* means much more to the Indian than to merely call Him the divine being. It conveys the sense of a peculiar blending of divinity and beauty in a way in which no English word can do.

Of the six systems of Indian philosophy there is one that should be of particular interest to the Indian Christian, i.e. the *yoga* system. I do not pretend to assert that this system as a philosophical one is very clear or easily understandable. But the *yogin* has a vast and interesting technique for the promotion of concentration which may be usefully tried by the Christian, as a form of meditation. The Christian needs to develop a prayer technique of his own and he will do well to explore the possibilities of posture and control of breath. These remarks apply mainly to private and individual worship.

Preparatory purification has played an important part in Hindu worship. We Indian Christians have on the whole tended to neglect this side. The tank before the temple performs both a real and a symbolic function. The Christian has been somewhat unwilling to emphasize this aspect, perhaps due to the unconscious fear that it may create in the mind of the worshippers the idea that they become acceptable to God through their own personal efforts. There is also the possibility that there may be a transfer, again mainly unconscious, from purity of body to purity of soul. While we should be fully alive to these dangers, I think it is equally dangerous to go to the opposite extreme and say (at least in practice) that personal cleanliness before worship does not matter at all. Such an attitude definitely spells irreverence. How often do we rush to a Communion Service with unshaven faces and unwashed mouths? In our zeal to uphold the theological dogma of human incapacity we have tended to put a premium on human inefficiency.

There is one aspect of indigenization which is perhaps not so often discussed or thought about as it should be. I refer to the harmful effects of certain Western ideologies on Indian Christian thought. This is particularly the case regarding the crusading spirit and the idea that the Christian is a soldier. In the historic context of medieval Europe where the Christian had to fight actual physical battles he needed the inspiration of such ideas but they are entirely out of place in the Indian situation of today. Where the fight is on the spiritual level with highly developed religions the Christian needs an instrument much subtler than the sword. And should we talk of fighting at all or should we not rather borrow a phrase from contemporary political strategy—the round-table conference? Lest some immediately see red at this suggestion, I hasten to add that the aim of a round-table conference is not to compromise and capitulate

but to consult and benefit. Which is a more suitable uniform for the Christian—saffron robes or smart khaki?

In discussing indigenization of Christian worship we should not fail to remember that Hinduism is an ethnic religion. In an ethnic religion gods are born and bred up right amidst the people, so to speak. Legends coming down from the hoary past make these gods peculiarly their own. Therefore worship in an ethnic religion tends to develop along the lines of *familiarity* and *individualism*. Whereas the key-note of worship in historic religions is *dignity* and *corporateness*. Any helpful suggestions that we may get from Hindu practices will be in the department of private worship rather than congregational. To the small Christian community in India surrounded by much bigger and sometimes hostile religious groups congregational worship, and the solace and strength that the sharing of faith brings, is vital. But under the hurried conditions of modern living family prayers and individual meditations, which are equally important for the nurture of faith, are tending to get neglected. It is perhaps here that indigenization can be most effective.

In conclusion I wish to point out that indigenization is not an academic job where experts go into committee and draw up a list of innocuous ideas that can be 'safely' implanted in an exotic soil. It must be the result of the dynamic spirit of Christ working through the form of Hindu thought, adapting, moulding or transforming as the case may be. It must be the natural result of two spiritually minded groups living together as one family and sharing together their difficulties, ideas and ideologies.

Viewing the matter from the psychological point of view I wish to emphasize the following three points:

1. That the East-West controversy in religion may merely be the means through which certain fundamental inner conflicts find expression.
2. That the fear that some Christians show at the very suggestion of contact with Hindu thought may be pathological in origin and symptomatic of an ambivalent tendency (i.e. to hate the thing you love).
3. That the 'religious war mentality' that the Indian Christian has received as a part of a Western tradition is quite unsuitable in the present spiritual context in this country.

An Examination of Some Presuppositions of Biblical Criticism

M. E. GIBBS

The following remarks are not intended as a condemnation of the work of Biblical critics, still less as a plea for a return to fundamentalism. On the contrary, the writer thoroughly appreciates the new life and interest which has been brought into Biblical studies by a sane criticism, and the spiritual gain which has followed. What is attempted here is only an examination of certain assumptions which have underlain much critical study from the first and have often distorted the conclusions of very distinguished scholars. Nor is the pointing out of these presuppositions by any means a novelty. Some of them were noticed half a century ago by Sir William Ramsay and Bishop Gore ; others have been dealt with by the late Sir Frederick Kenyon.

Some Prejudices

The prejudices which have too often distorted Biblical scholarship are, first, a too exclusively literary approach. Too much importance has been attached to mere verbal points, at the expense of wider considerations. Too little attempt has often been made to answer such questions as how people in real life go about writing books, what the special conditions of book production were at the period concerned, what sort of evidence it is possible to obtain of historical facts in ancient times, and what amount of evidence is normally accepted as sufficient by secular historians. Again, until very recently, the literary critics tended to work in entire disregard of the archaeologists. There was a little excuse for this in the fact that until about thirty years ago very little archaeological evidence bore directly on the Biblical narrative and the interpretation of much of it was doubtful.

Secondly, it was a pity that Biblical criticism found its roots in the German tradition of scholarship. Valuable as the results of German scholarship were in many fields of investigation in the nineteenth century, it was constantly liable to be marred by excessive specialization and lack of common sense. The German scholar was constantly liable to spend his immense diligence and capacity for detail in maintaining a thesis which the breath of a little common sense would have shown to be absurd. A second disadvantage of this German background was the

Lutheran prejudice against the Church as a visible institution. Nowhere more than in Germany, the milch cow of the papacy where one-third of the whole country was included in the states of the Church, had the Reformation been a rebellion against organized Christianity as the late medieval world understood it. But this prejudice, which was noticed by Bishop Gore, has led to some very odd interpretations.

Two other prejudices may be noted. One is the prejudice against the possibility of supernatural action, which sometimes operates on assumptions which, if really examined and carried to their logical conclusion, would not only make nonsense of the Bible, but would make Christianity and all other religions, and even all thought, impossible. The second is the prejudice in favour of 'progress' and 'development' and the assumption that whatever is later in date must, for that reason alone, be superior.

Some Judgments

These prejudices have led to some indefensible judgments which are often unthinkingly assumed as 'the assured results of Biblical criticism'. For instance Moffat in his translation indulges in many rearrangements of text. Apart from the question whether it is fair to alter in this way the received form of ancient literature, one may ask how Moffat and those who think with him suppose these displacements to have occurred. In printed books, which are folded and bound after they are printed, such displacements are very easy. In a written codex, there is always the possibility that the binding may come loose and the book be erroneously rebound. But how could these things happen to a papyrus roll, in which the sheets were fixed together before they were written on, and where there was no binding to come loose? Would it not be better in the case of such things as a suggested rearrangement of the last discourses in St. John's Gospel, to exercise a little more patience in elucidating the significance of the existing order?

Again, take the case of the Pastoral Epistles. The one really substantial argument against their being Pauline is their language—the remarkable number of Low Greek words to be found in them and nowhere else in the New Testament. Yet the impressiveness of this argument is much reduced when we remember the admitted fact that St. Paul used an amenuensis who was not a short-hand writer; and, in a world where spectacles were not yet invented, he probably grew less and less capable, as he got older, of correcting the work of his amenuensis. Recently two sets of articles appeared by a well-known Indian bishop—one in the 'International Review of Missions' and the other in an Indian periodical. On grounds of style alone, almost any critic would adjudge them to be of different authorship; yet in fact there is no serious doubt that both are genuine, but in one case style and language have been corrected by an editor whose mother tongue is English, in the other case not.

Again, the weakness of the German school of scholarship is shown in the prevalence of circular arguments. Too often a theory has been made the norm and used to judge such a question as the authenticity of a saying of our Lord as recorded in the Gospels. For example, critics made up their minds, on the basis of St. Mark's Gospel, that our Lord kept the fact of His Messiahship a dead secret until St. Peter's confession; and then

used this alleged fact to condemn as unauthentic the conversation with the Samaritan woman in St. John's Gospel. In this connection, it is difficult to understand the stir made by 'Form Criticism'. If this simply means that the gospels as a whole and the sayings, parables and incidents they contain, were written down, not at random but with some definite purpose, and that it will help our understanding if we can discover what that purpose was, this is surely plain common sense and ought never to have been doubted. Anything more elaborate seems to be mere fantasy.

The New Testament

The German Protestant prejudice against institutional religion has two bad effects. The first is a tendency to treat the Biblical documents in isolation, as if they had just been dug up by archaeologists after centuries of oblivion, instead of having been all the time the centre of a living tradition. One result of this is a tendency to be prejudiced against the traditional view of the authorship of the Biblical books. There does really sometimes seem to be an unconscious bias in favour of thinking any other view of authorship intrinsically more probable. And yet in fact the very opposite is the case, particularly where the New Testament is concerned. They were the approved scriptures of an organized body, part of whose very reason for existence was to bear witness to the truth of certain historical facts. The acceptance by the Church of certain writings as the authentic work of certain authors is in itself a very important piece of historical evidence, and, if we feel bound to dissent from it, our grounds must be very strong indeed, and we are also bound to account for the growth of the mistaken tradition of authorship. Three examples of the working of this principle may be given. The first is the epistle to the Ephesians. A recent writer has once again thrown doubt on the Pauline authorship of this epistle. The author acknowledges that the external evidence is all on one side. Surely in this case, that ought to have been enough, and any difficulties about the internal evidence should be ascribed to failure to appreciate the many-sidedness of St. Paul's thought. St. Matthew's Gospel is a more difficult case. As it stands, it cannot be of apostolic authorship, since none of the Twelve would have been dependent on St. Mark in the way our existing Gospel evidently is. Then, why does St. Matthew's Gospel stand first of our four, with an apostle's name attached to it? The problem can be solved with a hint from Papias. What St. Matthew wrote—and at a date considerably before St. Mark—was the collection of sayings which Papias calls the *logia* and the existence of which critics have detected in the document Q. But this was in Aramaic and, therefore, soon became useless to a Greek-speaking Church. So somewhere in the eighties of the first century, some Greek-speaking Christian produced a new and expanded edition of St. Matthew, translated into Greek and completed with other material. This was so much more useful than the original St. Matthew that the latter ceased to be copied, and it looks as if the same fate very nearly overtook the original St. Mark too. It follows that, if we want to reconstruct Q, or the original St. Matthew, we have to include not merely those passages which are common to Matthew and Luke and not found in Mark, but every non-Markan passage in Matthew which is not demonstrably from some other source. The third example

is the Gospel according to St. John. A detailed argument would be out of place here, but it seems clear that prejudice has done much to obscure the strength of the evidence for apostolic authorship, both internal and external. Here also another element has entered into the story—the failure to grasp the Biblical view of history. Because St. John is manifestly telling his story in the light of the spiritual significance he has come to find in it through a lifetime of Christian discipleship, it is supposed that he cannot have been concerned with the accuracy of its historical setting or with correcting the chronology of St. Mark. Yet Papias suggests that that was just what he intended to do. The whole point of the Biblical attitude to history centring in the incarnation is that it is the objective historical fact that is charged with spiritual significance, and therefore accurate recording of fact is of real importance.

The Old Testament

The same principle obtains in Old Testament criticism, although, through the greater age of the documents, it needs to be applied rather differently. How did Mosaic authorship come to be ascribed to the Pentateuch, and why were the Psalms ascribed to David and wisdom literature to Solomon? The usual answer, which amounts to the assertion that the people who first made these ascriptions were such fools that they could not distinguish between a lie and the truth, simply will not do. Let us take the case of Moses and the Law. A nucleus undoubtedly was genuinely Mosaic, and everything points to that nucleus having been the Ten Commandments written on the two tablets of stone on Sinai. As Israel settled down in Palestine, each local sanctuary with its Levitical priests would possess its copy of the original law. But a mass of case law would soon grow up round the original nucleus which would not be quite uniform from sanctuary to sanctuary. It could all be considered Mosaic, because it was all an interpretation of Moses' original law, and soon the priests would become genuinely unable to distinguish the additions from the original. Later, under the influence of the prophets, a revision of the codes would occur. Much would be discovered which was really owing to Canaanite influence and it would rightly be rejected by the prophets as not representing the spirit of Moses. One such reformed code would seem to have been that now called H, representing the influence of Isaiah on the priests of the temple at Jerusalem. The Deuteronomic code, with its northern features and its insistence on worship at a single sanctuary, would be the work of refugees from the northern kingdom, impressed by the Jerusalem of Hezekiah and Isaiah and its steadfast resistance to Senacharib.

Nothing seems more perverse than such a statement as this from Miss Parmelee's widely recommended book, 'A Guide-book to the Bible':—'Probably none of the Psalms were composed by David, for the words in which they are written and the ideas they express belong to a period six hundred years and more after Israel's royal poet died'. That would bring the earliest of the Psalms down to about 360 B.C.—about the time of Ezra, a manifestly absurd statement. Yet Miss Parmelee believes that the history of David in the book of Samuel rests on an almost contemporary prose history, of which she even believes she can name the author. But a prose history of that type is a much more

sophisticated type of literature than religious lyrics like the Psalms. Of course, no serious scholar has ever claimed that David was the author of all of them, but we are surely doing violence to all probability in denying his authorship of some of them.

The literary convention which ascribes the wisdom literature to Solomon is a little more difficult to account for. But this type of literature evidently originated in Egypt, and Solomon married Pharaoh's daughter, so that his reign would be the most favourable period for Egyptian cultural influence to be felt. Solomon need not necessarily have practised this form of literary composition himself, but the argument that the luxurious polygamous king could not have composed the prudent maxims of proverbs is by no means conclusive. Dickens, the high priest of Victorian domesticity, made his own home unhappy.

Again, the inclusion in one book of Isaiah of the particular selection of prophetic utterances which we find there needs explanation. The suggestion that Isaiah in fact founded a school of prophecy, the utterances of which were naturally collected in one volume, meets the case admirably.

Of course, these arguments are not meant to deny the existence of really and deliberately pseudonymous works, both within and without the canon, particularly those Apocalypses written under the stress of the Antiochene persecution when the pseudonymity would be a necessary protection for the authors. For a similar reason the early Christians referred to Rome as Babylon.

The Prophets

Another result of the prejudice in favour of religious individualism with which the critics started is some very curious interpretations of the teaching of the prophets. It is taken for granted that the eighth and seventh century prophets denounced, not the corruption of temple worship, but temple worship in itself. Amos's phrase, 'Did ye bring unto me sacrifices and offerings in the wilderness forty years, O house of Israel?' has been made to carry more weight than it will bear. It has been absurdly used to suggest that the whole system of animal sacrifice was part of the corruption which the Israelite religion underwent in Canaan. It is very improbable that a tribe of pastoral nomads did not practice animal sacrifice; and in fact the Old Testament taken as a whole suggests the much more probable view that it was a custom far older than Moses, though he no doubt regulated it. Again, the unity of the book of Ezekiel has been challenged on the grounds that the stern teacher of individual responsibility of chapter eighteen and similar passages could not also have been the seer of the vision of restored temple worship with which the book closes. Must an Old Testament prophet have been so one-ideaed? And is there really any difficulty involved here? In the early part of the book, Ezekiel sees the presence of the Lord forsaking the temple because of the corruptions of those who worship there. He finds himself called to preach to a community of refugees—of displaced persons who have been violently torn from the community life in which they had been bred and the only hope of preventing them from going all to pieces morally was to bring home to them their responsibility as individuals. But why should the necessity

of doing that have prevented Ezekiel from longing for a restored and reformed community? After all, the individual and his religious life are not something to be opposed to the community and its life. The best community is composed of the best individuals; and the individual can only attain his fullest development in a community. The people of God is one of the great themes which runs through the whole Bible, both Old and New Testaments; it is a perverse interpretation which substitutes for this an imagined progress from corporate to individual religion. A similar prejudice is the sole ground for the view that our Lord did not intend to found a Church or make of the Eucharist a rite of perpetual obligation.

The prejudice against the supernatural has probably decreased in this generation, but it can still lead to some strange judgments, such as Cadoux's rejection of the evidence for the Virgin Birth and the Resurrection in his 'Life of Jesus of Nazareth' in the Pelican series. The only valid reason for this is a fixed conviction that miracles never happen.

Progress and Development

The prejudice in favour of 'progress' and 'development' is more subtle. It is quite true that there is in the Bible a progressive revelation of God in a sense which is true of no other religious system. In fact, the tendency has been all the other way. It is not altogether easy to get at what the Buddha originally taught, but it seems clear that it is very poorly represented by the Tantric Buddhism of Tibet, and scarcely receives justice even in the purer Hinayana of Burma and Ceylon. The ethical monotheism of Zoroaster seems to have been captured almost at birth by the Magian priesthood, with very different religious ideas, and never to have recovered from the experience. This phenomenon can be paralleled in the field of biological evolution, in which the best observed mutations are actually examples of degeneracy. Although we do find a progressive revelation in the Bible, that is not to say that we find nothing else, or that the revelation opens out like a growing plant with no set-backs. At an earlier point in this article we alluded to the connection of Moses with the Ten Commandments. It has been the fashion to consider them the final distillation of a long process of evolution. Does it not fit the facts and the probability better to suppose them the result of a moment of spiritual insight granted to a very great man, which were afterwards overlaid with all sorts of irrelevant detail? Of course, it is not necessary to suppose that Moses himself understood all the implications of his vision. Which of us ever does? And it is quite certain that the Israelites as a whole did not understand him. Or take the question of David's authorship of the fifty-first Psalm. There is here no difficulty about language or style, only the difficulty of believing that a man living about 1000 B.C. could have had so deep an experience of penitence. But David was, on all showing, a quite exceptionally great man, and there is no character in the whole Old Testament out of whose experience such a Psalm could so fittingly come. David was a sensual and highly emotional person; he was a great warrior, capable of craft and cruelty, as well as of warm affection and noble generosity; he was a vigorous and positive person, not a stained-glass saint. But the great penitents have always been made of such stuff; and, strange as it may

seem to some scholars, the men after God's own heart do not seem to be the colourless, blameless people, but the vigorous and positive ones. The beloved disciple was also the son of thunder. No description of our Lord Himself could have been wider of the mark than 'pale Galilean'. How should not the source of all life and all love delight most in the vital and the loving?

The Post-Critical Age

This is sometimes spoken of as the 'post-critical age'. If that means that all the critical questions raised about the Bible have been settled once and for all, that is manifestly untrue and always will be untrue. If it means that we can afford to neglect the historical truth of the Biblical record and concentrate henceforward on its spiritual message, that is surely a dangerous misunderstanding of what the revelation of God in history means. It is the history which is the revelation, the Bible is after all only its inspired record and interpretation. But if it means that we need no longer be obsessed by critical questions to such an extent that we become deaf to the message of the Bible as a whole; that we are now free to go back to the Biblical message with a quickened and enhanced understanding of its meaning, that is gloriously true.



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Book Reviews

Retreat Addresses of Edward Keble Talbot: by Lucy Menzies. S.P.C.K. 12s. 6d.

This slim volume of 180 pages contains the addresses of Fr. Talbot given at three retreats at various times, and sundry talks on diverse occasions and a biographical introduction by Lucy Menzies. The biographical essay forms an excellent background for a better appreciation of the retreat addresses. Edward Talbot came from a very cultured and deeply religious home and 'there was a wonderful aristocracy of mind and spirit in that great period of Talbots and Lyttletons and their wide circle of gifted friends... Their lives were full of all that was best in the religion and culture of their day—books, pictures, music, and, not the least splendid, talk'. Talbot was the great son of a great family.

The excellence of a retreat does not ordinarily lie in the learned addresses that are delivered but in the personality of the conductor and in the manner of his communicating spiritual truth. 'He helped us to feel the heaven about our heads and at the same time trudged with us in the dust', said one who attended one of Talbot's retreats. Fr. Talbot was a Religious, being a member of the Community of the Resurrection (Mirfield) which was founded by Bishop Gore. For eighteen years he was its Superior. He had the precious distinction of a spiritual director. He was a man of God and had the gift of being able to lead men to God. Without a real understanding of the personality of Fr. Talbot the message contained in his retreat addresses does not make much appeal to a casual reader. These addresses are very unlike theological essays and do not easily lend themselves to be reviewed, summarized and commented upon. Therefore it is not always possible to convey the depth and power of the spiritual truth contained therein. If a retreat can be described as an earnest effort at retracing one's steps to God, the addresses which form only a small part of the process may be regarded as flares intended to illumine the road of the pathfinder. Actually the addresses do not grip the attention of the reader if he has no interest in spiritual life. Talbot's instructions presented in this volume are replete with utterances of great profundity. Here are some: 'Religion is saying yes to God'. 'Death is the last utterance and expression of what we mean by sin.' 'There is only one true religion, one thing which binds us to God: to do His will as it comes to us and is revealed to us in Christ, in the Scriptures, and in our moral conscience.' 'Prayer is the school of desire.' 'Our perfection consists in conforming with the Divine Person, God Himself.' 'Grace of God is—God living, active within us, transforming us.' This catena of the sayings of Fr. Talbot can easily be multiplied. Perhaps I may be permitted to quote his famous picture of the Island of the Sirens. 'God forbid that our ship should be wrecked on the rocks of self-indulgence and self-love. If needs be we must bind ourselves, put discipline and duress on ourselves, in order to go safely. And, perhaps some time we shall embark in the ship of which our Orpheus, Christ, is with us and his music will so hold us that we shall not hear the song of the Sirens. We shall not only go safe; we shall go free.'

Fr. Talbot's retreat instructions are so fascinating and uplifting that one would want to know more about the man who is capable of such spirituality. Therefore, *Talbot, His Community and His Friends*, which has just been published, forms a sequel to the volume under review.

His last retreat given at Pleshy is a ripe fruit of his learning, discipline and devotion. On this occasion he takes us back to the fundamentals of spiritual life, viz. the end for which we have been created; the initiative of God; the nature of sin (sin is to make ourselves the end of ourselves); Grace of God; Repentance (the turning of our whole mind about everything); Christian joy; and the sacrament of the present moment. The retreat closes with the following words of practical advice: 'As we come to the end of our retreat it is important to lay hold of whatever

God has given you. Cleave to it. And make your resolution simple and concrete and for a limited time. Let all the rest go.'

In these addresses one becomes vividly aware of the striking personality of the Conductor—Edward Talbot.

Calcutta

E. SAMBAYYA

Essays Philosophical and Theological : by Rudolph Bultmann. S.C.M. 21s.

No country has played quite the rôle in stimulating critical Biblical and theological thought that has been Germany's. Nineteenth century theology was dominated by scholars who received an intensive training in the idealist movement and the names to conjure with were Kant and Hegel but the situation is very different today. Appropriately from Alpine Switzerland blow the strong blasts of empirical and positive dogmatic theology which will have no truck with philosophy and we live today in a post-liberal, post-idealist, atomic age. Philosophy as well as theology is faced with radical questions which demand radical answers. The logical positivists retreat into a limited specialist world of definition and analysis, the theologians likewise at times give the appearance of narrow specialists but in the middle of the twentieth century the problems of living, so complex and so urgent, demand a meeting of disciplines and from this point of view the appearance of this new Library of Philosophy and Theology is most welcome. There is no doubt that these essays of R. Bultmann deserve a place. Bultmann is a modernist in the sense that he desires to make the Gospel relevant to this day and generation. It is this concern which made him open the controversy of 'demythologising'. If the nineteenth century 'modernists' were Hegelians, immanentist, optimistic and moralistic, Bultmann is obviously under the influence of the existentialists, particularly Jaspers and the more enigmatic Heidegger. Bultmann's position is Luther interpreted in terms of existentialism—it is strongly transcendental, critical of ethical theory and very pessimistic.

The essays include a study of the Greek concepts of Polis and Hades in Sophoclean tragedy, aspects of Old Testament interpretation, the relation of Christianity and Humanism, and points of contact and conflict between Christianity and other faiths. A point which is made more than once is that the classical world saw man as part of a kosmos, an ordered relationship of the parts to the whole, but the Bible sees man over against the world in which he is not truly at home. The dread of the world fills him, as was realized by the gnostics. Bultmann at times shows gnostic tendencies and questions the optimism of the Old Testament which allows men to rejoice in the world which God created. Is this sense of hostility to the world altogether Christian? Does Bultmann see the end not in escape but transfiguration? There is much in these essays of intense interest and much will particularly interest readers in Asia who, like readers in Europe, are faced with the fundamental problems of human existence.

One senses in these essays despite their learning and deep concern for Christian verities something of the excessive individualism of the existentialists and a lack of a sound doctrine of the Church and the Holy Spirit.

Bangalore

LEONARD M. SCHIFF

THE CHRISTIAN STUDENTS' LIBRARY

No. 8: *How Shall I Study the Psalms?* : by A. P. Carleton. 226 pages. Rs.2 10as.

Father Carleton not only answers this question but shows us how fitting use may be made of the Psalter in public worship.

In the Introduction Father Carleton lays down principles by which the Psalms are to be interpreted; the Psalms must be seen as a revelation of Man's spiritual experience; this experience must be viewed against the background of historical setting, wherever possible; a third principle is that we must seek to bring out the full meaning of the Psalms in the light of Him who said, 'All things must be fulfilled which are written in the Law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms concerning me' (St. Luke 24:44).

At first sight this might seem innocuous enough until in explanation of this principle which 'alone is able to bring out the full meaning of the Psalms' Father Carleton says that the Psalter is a book telling men 'about Jesus and their life in fellowship with Him and with one another in the Church' (page 14). Such an

interpretation seems to us little removed from allegory which we should define as a reading into the text of ideas that are not there but which the author describes as that which has 'no connection with the original sense or the legitimate Christological interpretation'. This principle enables him to say, e.g. in his commentary on Psalm 38, that 'Jesus speaks as the head of the human race bearing the sins of all mankind'. The same principle leads to a wrong exegesis of Psalm 33:6.

Father Carleton's arguments for the Davidic authorship of the Psalms traditionally ascribed to him seem rather far-fetched. Since the Psalms are not only historical documents but prayers of spiritual content those best qualified to pass judgement on them are poets and saints who have felt the Psalms in question to be Davidic. So too did Jesus, for, 'when he quoted the 110th Psalm as David's he was not just following in ignorance the inadequate knowledge of his contemporaries, he was setting the seal of his spiritual insight on the traditional ascription' (page 23). This argument would seem to prove that because Jesus said, 'as Jonah was in the belly of the whale . . .' Jonah was in fact swallowed by a whale.

These criticisms are not the reactions to a bad book, but to a good book which goes far to bring out the meaning and spiritual value of the Psalms.

No. 9: *Jonah and Daniel*: by A. T. Hanson. 118 pages. Re.1 8as.

To write a satisfactory commentary on *Jonah and Daniel* in such short compass is virtually impossible, but Dr. Hanson has nearly done it.

An introduction to these books must be largely critical but though the author has summarized clearly and fairly the evidence that these books are not historical the meaning and value of the books does not lie concealed beneath a mass of criticism.

The meaning of the 'parable' of Jonah is clearly shown and it is pleasant to read a book that is not only written in India but is obviously meant for readers in India, e.g. the doctrine implicit in 4: 9-11 is contrasted with not only 'scientific' thought but Hindu philosophy.

Daniel is a more difficult book but again Dr. Hanson emphasizes the message of the book, that the author writing in the time of Antiochus Epiphanes encourages the faithful by emphasizing God's Lordship in history and the coming deliverance.

Yet the reviewer is not satisfied with some of the statements made. In his necessarily short note on 'the Son of Man' Dr. Hanson while pointing out that the phrase in Daniel is collective says that, 'by our Lord's time it did imply a heavenly messiah' (page 72). The statement on page 73 that 'Our Lord meant it to indicate messianic authority (though perhaps concealed authority)' does not have the same meaning. If the former statement is meant to be a synonym for the latter, well and good, though in that case it is not clear—but if it means what it seems to say it is clearly false. If 'Son of Man' had been thought of messianically 'by our Lord's time' Jesus who constantly spoke of Himself as the Son of Man would neither have hailed St. Peter's confession at Caesarea Philippi nor would He have told the disciples to tell no man of His Messiahship.

Dr. Hanson says of the ascription of the book to Daniel, 'The author of Daniel had no intention of deceiving . . . Apocalyptic was a recognized form of literature among the Jews and everyone knew the conventions that belonged to it: pseudonymous authorship, contemporary history put in the form of prophecy . . .' (page 36). While this view is supported, e.g. by H. H. Rowley, the other view which Dr. Hanson does not mention is not without force, i.e. that 'owing to the prevailing belief that inspiration was dead these writers were forced to assume a pseudonym to gain a hearing'. Dr. Hanson's view has its difficulties. How is it to be explained that conventions which everybody knew came to be forgotten so quickly?

Serampore

R. N. STEWART

The Quickening Word: by Laurence E. Browne, D.D. Hefer & Sons Ltd., London, pp. 110.

This attractive book mainly contains Dr. Browne's Hulsean Lectures delivered in 1954 and is the fruit of an impulse, long cherished by the author, of presenting an interpretation of the Christian doctrines to our Muslim neighbours in a way which will remove some of their objections to the Christian faith. The Muslim is opposed to certain Christian doctrines, not because they are objectionable in themselves, but because the Church has failed to present them effectively to the Muslim mind. 'The more we look at it', says Dr. Browne, 'the more obvious it becomes that the cause

of the failure of Christianity over against Islam in successive ages has been the same: the inability to put clearly before the Muslims the underlying doctrine on which the Christian life is based' (p. 4). The contention 'that it should be sufficient to set before the non-Christians the Christian life in practice without any exposition of its underlying philosophy' may be true when interpreting Christianity to backward and less organized religious groups, as Dr. Browne himself points out; but to a people of a highly organized religion, with a doctrinal system and theology of their own, such as the Muslims, the intellectual appeal is a necessity. No religion can expect to survive unless it can express its basic doctrines in a way which is intrinsically reasonable. *The Quickenning Word* is, therefore, addressed to those of our Muslim friends who are faced with genuine intellectual difficulty in understanding the Christian faith; and we know that there are quite a few Muslims who have outgrown the narrow outlook of orthodoxy, and are keen to have their difficulties solved.

In the opening chapter, the author presents a careful analysis of the real issue. To his mind the problem is not to confront fanaticism in Islam, an aspect often emphasized by workers among Muslims, but it is to challenge the failure of the Church in presenting the doctrines effectively in a language understood by the Muslims. Unless this difficulty is overcome, the writer thinks there is little hope of fruitful evangelism among Muslims.

In the seven chapters that follow, Dr. Browne deals with those doctrines of Christianity that are often challenged by the Muslims, namely the Unity of God, Sin, the Conquest of Sin, Jesus Christ, Man, the Indwelling God, and the Trinity. In tracing the history of these doctrines, the author has brought into relief some of the early heresies with which the Church had to contend. It was with these erroneous views that Islam first came in contact, and consequently had a distorted picture of Christianity; a picture still held authentic by the Muslims and regarded as the basis of Christian doctrines. Dr. Browne has taken great pains to dissociate the orthodox teaching of the Church from these heresies, and has outlined the various trends which led to the formulation of the accepted doctrines of the Church.

Another feature of Dr. Browne's book is that in defining the Christian faith he has not only interpreted it in the light of the ancient philosophies, but he has integrated it with the critical and scientific thought and language of today, a fact which appeals most to people who exercise their reason and judgment in accepting a belief.

Dr. Browne has laid the foundation of a new method of approach to the Muslims, and we hope for more research along the same lines.

Calcutta

KENNETH D. W. ANAND

Book Notices

Blessing Unbounded, a Vision : by Harry Blamires. Longmans. 12s. 6d. 185 pages.

In previous books Mr. Blamires paid visits to purgatory and to hell. In *Blessing Unbounded* the author takes us through what he calls the Border Country to Heaven. It seems that on the road through this countryside the soul encounters temptations similar to earthly ones, and reactions show that much of the earthly self is taken into this part of the hereafter, to be purged away. Fortunately there is still a chance after much self-revelation and discipline to get rid of this self. Mr. Blamires has a shrewd awareness, revealed also for instance in 'The Devil's Hunting Grounds', of how very, very little even professing Christians know about themselves and their follies of thinking. He combines a delightful sense of humour with matter provocative of salutary thought. By this means he often 'laughs us' into seeing criticisms of ourselves which by any other means might not have been so readily acceptable.

In the opinion of the reviewers this is not everybody's book, because it treads the risky path of near-frivolity—without, be it added, at once going over the edge. But there are some people who probably cannot easily tread this path. This is not to say that we would limit the book's possible influence. We wish everybody would read it, for it is certain that everybody could profit spiritually by reading it, once they accept this particular medium of writing. The lessons are universal ones, of which in closing we mention only one, namely that it is wiser to aim at bringing more of heaven to earth, than trying to bring earth into heaven.

Hazaribagh

H. AND B. HARVEY

The Status of Man in the Universe : by Albert Van Eyken. Longmans, London, 1956, viii plus 128 pages. Available from Orient Longmans, Calcutta. 7s. 6d.

In the face of tendencies in various branches of knowledge to underrate the place of man in the universe, Mr. Van Eyken tries to establish his status in it. When man's size and length of life are compared to the immensities of space and time revealed by astronomy and astro-physics the author rightly answers that the comparison is made by a human mind that can comprehend both and therefore must be greater. The author is concerned, as a Christian, to show further that the solutions to many of the problems of physics (e.g. notion of solidity) or epistemology (the validity of sensory experience) cannot be found within these disciplines but in a metaphysical reality that is beyond them. Current and popular notions of evolution, and Freudian psychology also come in for discussion and some debunking.

The book asserts that while man has no right to dethrone man, in the presence of God he must be humble. While certain sections of the book may not appeal to non-Roman Catholic readers, the book as a whole will prove useful to all those who feel that *science* has in some sense made religion either irrelevant or disreputable. It must prove specially beneficial to those, especially students, to whom a little knowledge seems to be the whole of wisdom.

M. P. J.

Seven Steps to Heaven : by Bishop J. W. C. Wand. Longmans. 3s.

Bishop Wand has in this book given us the teaching which he had often given from pulpits and during retreats about the implications of the Christian life. As such the book may be taken as a plain man's guide to the understanding of the treasures of Christianity which he can enjoy here and now. What the Bishop sets forth here is indeed the spiritual pilgrimage of every Christian. If we are to have a better grasp of the saving truths of Christianity we cannot do better than to use these pages as an aid to our meditation on such great themes of Spiritual import as The Awakening, Detachment, Illumination, Darkness, Disinterested Love, Contemplation and Union.

B. M.

The Church in South East Asia : by Winburn T. Thomas and Rajah B. Manikam, Friendship Press. N.Y. 1956. \$2.50.

'The hope of South East Asia is the Christian Church that is growing there'. This is the thesis that the authors seek to substantiate in this most readable account of the Churches in Burma, the Philippines, Indonesia, Indo-China, Thailand, Malaya and Taiwan.

The Mar Thoma Syrian Liturgy : A translation into English by George K. Chacko. Morehouse-Gorham Co., New York, 1956. Copies in India available from Associated Indian Enterprises Ltd., P33 G. C. Avenue, Calcutta 13.

A translation of the liturgy in use in the Mar Thoma Syrian Church, with a foreword by Canon Dr. Edward N. West of St. John's Cathedral, New York.

EDITORIAL NOTE

As announced in the last number, from the next year the *Journal* will be published quarterly—in January, April, July and October. We hope that the *Journal* will serve its purpose better with four issues a year than with two as until now. More subscribers are needed for the satisfactory running of the *Journal*, and readers making the *Journal* better known will be doing a service.

The revised subscription rates that will come into effect with the next number will be as follows :—

India	Rs.5-0-0
U.K. and Europe	£0-10-0
U.S.A. and Canada	\$2.50

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